



# BOVINE SPONGIFORM ENCEPHALOPATHY SURVEILLANCE UPDATE

## Enhanced BSE Surveillance Plan

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has begun an enhanced BSE surveillance plan following the diagnosis of BSE in Washington State in December 2003. The goal of the plan is to determine if BSE is present in the National Herd and, if so, at what level.

As many samples as possible will be collected over the next 12-18 months from "high-risk" adult cattle that:

- ◆ Cannot rise or cannot walk
- ◆ Show neurological signs
- ◆ Are condemned, euthanized or died following signs that may be associated with BSE
- ◆ Die from unknown causes.

A USDA cost recovery system is planned to aid the cattle industry during this surveillance program. These costs include the transportation of carcasses, storage of products or carcasses, and the disposal of products.

## Source of Samples

To examine as many high-risk cattle as possible, samples will be taken on the farm, at slaughtering facilities, rendering plants, livestock auctions and at laboratories.

The surveillance program will also include samples from apparently normal, aged cattle. After sampling, the carcasses of these cattle will be held (not processed) until the BSE test results are negative.

## BSE Testing Protocol in California

The CDFA and USDA personnel will collect samples from high-risk cattle throughout California. The samples will be sent to the California Animal Health & Food Safety Laboratory in Davis. The laboratory will run an approved rapid screening test for BSE. If the sample is negative, no further testing will be performed.

A small percentage of samples may have inconclusive results because of the sensitivity of the screening test. An inconclusive test is one in which a negative result cannot be determined using a single test. All inconclusive samples will be retested at the National Veterinary Service Laboratories, (NVSL) using immunohistochemistry - the internationally recognized gold standard for BSE testing. This test will determine if the sample is truly BSE positive or negative.

Carcasses or rendered products will be held until there is a negative laboratory result, and then they will be released.

## California Needs Cattle Producers Assistance

Testing as many "high-risk" cattle over 30 months of age as possible will assist the U.S. in resuming trade in beef and beef products. Producers can assist in this effort by:

- ◆ Ensuring all cattle, including dead animals, are identified before leaving the premises.
- ◆ Keeping accurate animal identification and movement records.
- ◆ Keeping accurate feed records.
- ◆ Reporting cattle with neurological signs to your veterinarian.
- ◆ Disposing of carcasses appropriately, such as with a licensed renderer.

**The toll-free number for the BSE  
surveillance program is  
1-866-536-7593**

## Consequences of a BSE Diagnosis in California

Additional cases of BSE may be diagnosed during this surveillance. If BSE is confirmed, the carcass and rendered products will be destroyed. The positive animal will be traced to its premises of origin and the herd will be held until a full epidemiological investigation has been completed. Additional herds may be held if they are associated with the case. The movement of milk will not be impacted if BSE is diagnosed.

Because BSE does not spread from animal to animal, only cattle directly associated with the case will be destroyed - not the entire herd. The investigation will focus on cattle that may have been exposed at a young age to the same feed as the infected animal. Cattle that consumed the same feed as the case will be traced and destroyed. Any offspring of the infected animal will also be traced and destroyed.

Identification and movement records will be used to clear all but these associated animals. Other cattle may be destroyed if there is insufficient identification or records to determine their identity.

CDFA Animal Health Branch Offices	
Sacramento (HQ)	916-654-1447
Modesto	209-491-9350
Ontario	909-947-4462
Redding	530-225-2140
Tulare	559-685-3500
<b>USDA/APHIS/VS 916-854-3900 or 877-741-3690</b>	